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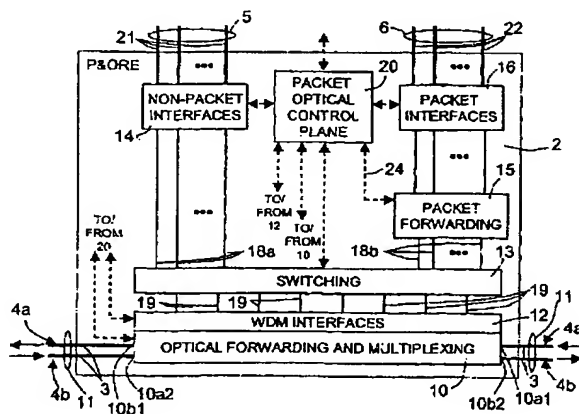
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(54) Title: PACKET AND OPTICAL ROUTING EQUIPMENT AND METHOD



(57) Abstract: A packet and optical routing equipment (2) exchanges multiplexed optical signals with other equipment in a network and exchanges branch non-packet and packet signals with client equipment. The entering branch non-packet signals are converted into electric signals by a non-packet interface (14) and supplied directly to an electric switching unit (13); the entering packet branch signals are converted into electric signals, supplied to a packet forwarding module (15) and routed to the electric switching unit (13). The electric switching unit (13) switches the electric signals toward a WDM interface (12) that converts them into optical signals at selected wavelengths that are added to the multiplexed optical signals. The entering multiplexed optical signals that should be terminated in the equipment are extracted, converted into electrical signals, and electrically switched toward the non-packet interface (14) or the packet forwarding module (15) according to whether they are of non-packet or of a packet type. The switching unit (13) is of configurable type and may switch a variable ratio of electric non-packet and packet signals according to the traffic requirements.

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